

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Please amend the paragraph in lines 17-30 on page 4 as follows:

Moreover, while the front surface is subjected to the top coating process to be given a polished finish, it is only the front veneer 61 arranged with the ~~opaque~~ substrate 65 as its background that can be seen through the topcoat layer 66. For this reason, the front veneer 61 lacks the feel of depth and the feel of gloss (shiny brightness which looks different depending on viewing angles), and hence only a monotonous finish can be obtained. For the same reason, the design of the wood-based decorative article 67 is substantially determined by the front veneer 61, so that as long as the front veneer 61 remains unchanged, the design of the wood-based decorative article 67 is basically unchanged to provide only a substantially fixed design.

Please amend the paragraph in lines 2-5 on page 20 as follows:

Then, the reinforcing member 3 is bonded to the rear surface of the ~~dyed~~ veneer 1 by the ~~colored~~ adhesive 2, whereby the veneer sheet 4 is made (FIG. 3(c)).

Please amend the paragraph from line 24 on page 20 to line 8 on page 21 as follows:

As described above, according to the present embodiment, since the veneer 1 is dyed before the reinforcing member 3 is bonded to the veneer 1 by the adhesive 2, the dye is allowed to penetrate fully into the vessels and fibers of the veneer 1 without being hindered by the adhesive 2 differently from the prior art, which makes it possible to achieve a beautiful finish with an enhanced grain of the veneer 1. Further, the ~~dyed~~ veneer 1 is impregnated with the ~~colored~~ adhesive 2, whereby the grain of the veneer 1 is still more enhanced, and at the same time, the tone and depth of the color of the veneer 1 can be changed by the color of the ~~colored~~ adhesive 2. Moreover, application of the topcoat on the front surface of the veneer 1 enhances smoothness of the front surface of the wood-based decorative article 7, thereby achieving a more beautiful finish. Further, since the surface of the wood-based decorative article 7 is protected, durability of the same can be enhanced.

Please amend the paragraph from line 17 on page 21 to line 4 on page 22 as follows:

Further, by being subjected to the dimensional stabilization process, the veneer 1 has the insides of cell walls thereof filled with polyethylene glycol, so that it is held in a swelled state (bulking effect). Consequently, even if compressive stress or tensile stress due to a difference in expansion factor

between the veneer 1 and the substrate 5 formed of the synthetic resin is generated in the veneer 1 e.g. in accordance with a change in humidity, the stress within the veneer 1 is accommodated or reduced by the bulking effect. Thus, humidity-dependent swelling or shrinking of the veneer 1 is controlled, and hence the dimensional stability of the veneer 1 is enhanced, which makes it possible to minimize the dimensional difference between the veneer 1 and the substrate 5, thereby preventing cracking and warpage of the veneer 1. Further, since the color of the polyethylene glycol colored by the coloring agent is superimposed upon the color of the ~~dyed~~ veneer 1, it is possible to change the tone and depth of the color of the veneer 1 according to the color of the colored dimensional stabilizer.

Please amend the paragraph from line 31 on page 31 to line 12 on page 32 as follows:

Therefore, according to this variation, the design layer 35 is seen through the transparent substrate 33 such that the veneer 32 is superimposed upon the design layer 35, which makes it possible to vary the design of the veneer 32. More specifically, in the case of the design layer 35 being a patterned design layer, it is possible to increase variation of the grain pattern of the veneer 32, whereas in the case of the same being a ~~colored~~ design layer 35 which is colored, it is possible to change the color tone of the veneer 32 into a different one. Further, in the case of the same being one having characters or letters thereon, it is possible to create a composite design formed by the grain pattern of the veneer

32 and the characters or letters. Thus, it is possible to vary the design of the article even if the veneer 32 remains the same.

Please amend the three paragraphs from line 1 on page 33 to line 7 on page 34 as follows:

The light source 36 may be configured such that one or both of the color and the amount of light can be varied, and the color and the amount of light can be adjusted by operating elements. This method makes it possible to change the color and/or the amount of light from the light source 36 to thereby cause a desired change in the color tone and brightness of the veneer 32. Further, although not shown in the drawings, the wood-based decorative article ~~31~~ 31b of the second variation may be configured such that it is provided with a light source 36. In this case, by illuminating the design layer 35 together with the veneer 32, it is possible to cause the design of the veneer 32 to emerge in a manner superimposed upon the design layer 35.

The fourth variation shown in FIG. 10 is characterized in that a light guide plate 37 is arranged on the rear surface of the substrate 33 of the third variation. The light guide plate 37 allows light from the light source 36 to pass therethrough while diffusing the same, to thereby make the light uniform. The light guide plate 37 is formed e.g. of frosted glass or opaque glass and mounted after the molding or forming of the wood-based decorative article ~~31~~ 31d. Therefore, in this variation, the light from the light source 36 is made uniform by

its light guide plate 37, whereby a natural and mild appearance of the veneer 32 can be obtained.

The fifth variation shown in FIG. 11 is characterized in that a display label 38 (display member) is provided on the front surface of the substrate 33 of the third variation. On the display label 38, there is displayed a character string or the like indicative of predetermined information to be given to the user. The display label 38 is pasted on the front surface of the veneer 32 upon or after the molding or forming of the wood-based decorative article ~~31~~ 31e. According to this variation, since the display label 38 is also illuminated from the rear side thereof by the light source 36, the information displayed on the display label 38 can be recognized even in a dark place.

Please amend the paragraph in lines 5-17 on page 35 as follows:

Although the wood-based decorative article 31, 31a-31g according to each of the above variations is based on the FIG. 6 construction, with only one or two of the reinforcing member 34, the design layer 35, the light source 36, the light guide plate 37, the display label 38 and the indicator 39 being added thereto as element(s) characterizing the variation, this is not limitative, but it is also possible to put into practice variations constructed by respective combinations of two or more of the component parts 34 to 39 other than the combinations shown above, whereby more diverse designs and display functions can be obtained.

Please amend the two paragraphs from line 22 on page 36 to line 9 on page 37 as follows:

Moreover, since transmission of the color of the substrate 45 to the veneer 43 is blocked by the ~~colored~~ reinforcing member 44, the color of the substrate 45 is prevented from influencing the tone color of the veneer 43. As a result, it is possible to select the color of a synthetic resin for forming the substrate 45, without reference to the color tone of the veneer 43. Further, when coloring including dyeing is performed on the veneer 34 so as to change the color tone of the veneer 43 to a desired one, a color to be used for the coloring can be selected independently of the color of the substrate 45.

FIG. 15 shows a wood-based decorative article according to a variation of the fourth embodiment. The wood-based decorative ~~article 41~~ article 41a is characterized in that a second reinforcing member 46 is additionally provided on the rear surface of the reinforcing member 44 of the FIG. 14 wood-based decorative article 41. The second reinforcing member 46 is formed e.g. of a wood-based veneer similar to the veneer 43. The second reinforcing member 46 is bonded to the rear surface of the reinforcing member 44.

Please amend the paragraph from line 26 on page 37 to line 11 on page 38 as follows:

Although in the present embodiment, the non-woven fabric colored by the coloring agent is used as the ~~eolored~~ reinforcing member 44, the coloration may be carried out by dyeing, or alternatively, a colored non-woven fabric commercially available may be used. Further, it is not absolutely required that the reinforcing member 44 is formed of a non-woven fabric, but any material capable of reinforcing the veneer 43 and colored enough to enhance the grain of the same can be used as the reinforcing member 44. Therefore, it is possible to employ any selected from a wide range of materials, including fibrous materials, such as woven fabrics and Japanese papers, veneers, and resin films, each of which may be colored e.g. during manufacturing of the wood-based decorative ~~article 41~~ article 41a or in advance, and composites of some of these materials. In any of these cases, it is possible to enhance the grain of the veneer 43 by the ~~eolored~~ reinforcing member 44, thereby obtaining a beautiful finish of the wood-based decorative ~~article 41~~ article 41a.